

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4837

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TAGS: EGEN, PE

SUBJECT: SECOND DIALOGUE WITH PUBLIC BY GOP MINISTERS

REF: LIMA 2856

1. PRIME MINISTER MORALES BERMUDEZ AND NINE OTHER GOP MINISTERS MET PUBLIC FORFOUR HOURS ON APRIL 18 IN SECOND OF MUCH BALLYHOODED "DIALOGUES WITH THE PEOPLE." THERE FOLLOW SOME OF MORE INTERESTING POINTS IN RATHER LACKLUSTER SESSION.

2. FOOD MINISTER HOYOS SAID THAT CREATION OF "PRODUCTION COUNCILS" AND "CONSUMER DEFENSE COMMITTEES" WAS BEING STUDIED IN ATTEMPT TO COMBAT "ARTIFICIAL" FOOD SHORTAGES AND PRICE RISES BY "INTERMEDIARIES," FOOD PRODUCERS WOULD BE "TOTALLY ORGANIZED" AND WOULD PARTICIPATE DIRECTLY IN PLANNING OF CROP CULTIVATION AND IN MARKETING OF HARVESTS. IN LATER TASK, PRODUCERS WILL BE JOINED BY CONSUMERS GROUPS.

3. COMMERCE MINISTER ARIAS INDICATED THAT HIS MINISTRY IS STUDYING "MUCH MORE DRASTIC" MEANS OF COMBATING FOOD SMUGGLING TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WHERE PRICES ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT SUBSIDIZED AND, THEREFORE, ARE MUCH HIGHER. HOYOS

ADDED THAT GOP FOOD SUBSIDY FOR 1975-76 BIENNium WILL BE 11.2 BILLION SOLES. MORALES BERMUDEZ STATED THAT FOOD SHORTAGES, ALTHOUGH ACUTE IN SOME AREAS, ARE NATIONAL PROBLEM. FOR THAT REASON, HE SAID, NEW WAGE AND PRICE POLICY WILL BE INITIATED TO STOP CONTRABAND (SIC) AND INCREASE PURCHASING POWER OF MASSES.

4. FISHERIES MINISTER TANTALEAN SAID THAT PERU CONSUMES MORE FISH PER CAPITA THAN ANY OTHER LATIN COUNTRY BUT THAT, ALTHOUGH CONSUMPTION IS RISING, NO REAL CHANGE IN PERUVIAN EATING HABITS HAS BEEN NOTED. IN AN ATTEMPT TO COMBAT THIS, SITES FOR SALE OF FISH PRODUCTS WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN "PUEBLOS POVENES" (SLUMS) WHICH SURROUND LIMA.

5. COMMENT: DIALOGUE WAS MORE SPIRITED THAN PREDECESSOR BUT NOTHING NEW COVERED. IT WAS BROADCAST LIVE ON RADIO AND TV TO ALL OF THE COUNTRY FOR FIRST TIME. BEFORE DIALOGUE BEGAN, MORALES BERMUDEZ EMPHATICALLY DENIED "RUMORS" TO EFFECT THAT DIALOGUE "IS AN ATTEMPT TO DISTRACT THE PEOPLE FROM THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS THAT GOP IS SUFFERING." HE ALSO DENIED THAT DIALOGUES ARE STAGED, THAT PEOPLE ARE PAID TO COME, AND THAT QUESTIONS ARE PREPARED AHEAD OF TIME BY GOP. HE ALSO SAID THAT GOP MINISTERS ARE PREPARED TO VISIT ANY FACTORY OR UNIVERSITY, THAT "WE ARE NOT AT ALL AFRAID TO DO THIS; IF THEY RECEIVE US, "WE WILL BE THERE." MORE THAN ONCE MORALES BERMUDEZ LOST CONTROL OF PROCEEDINGS. AT ONE POINT, DURING ENSUING UPROAR, MORALES BERMUDEZ THREATENED TO END SESSION. THINGS QUIETED DOWN ONLY SLIGHTLY, BUT HE DECIDED TO CONTINUE DESPITE CONFUSION. DURING HIATUS HE AND OTHER MINISTERS APPEARED QUITE EMBARRASSED.
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